

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

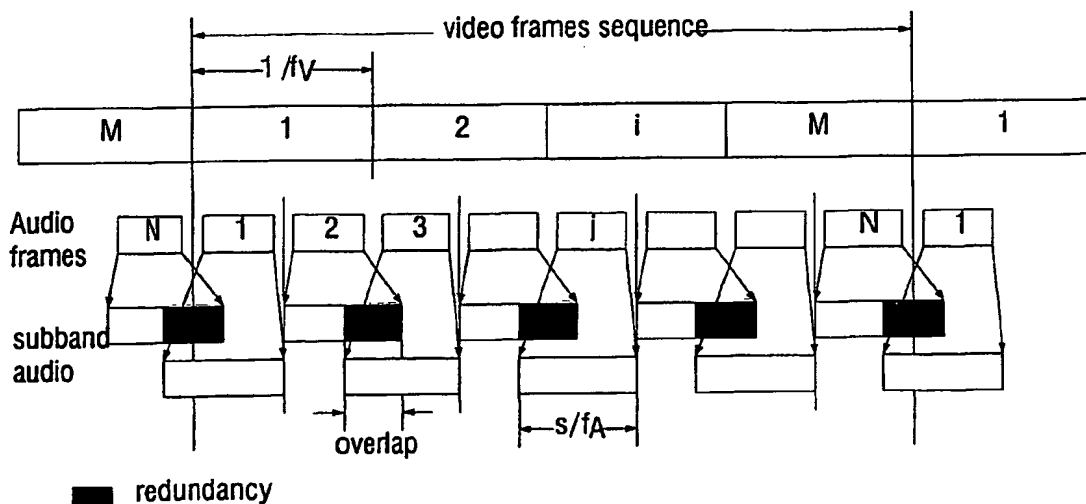
(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau(43) International Publication Date
24 July 2003 (24.07.2003)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 03/061299 A1

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **H04N 7/52** (74) Agent: **GROENENDAAL, Antonius, W., M.**; Internationaal Octrooibureau B.V., Prof. Holstlaan 6, NL-5656 AA Eindhoven (NL).
- (21) International Application Number: **PCT/IB02/05417**
- (22) International Filing Date:
12 December 2002 (12.12.2002)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
02075215.0 18 January 2002 (18.01.2002) EP
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- (81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- Published:
— with international search report
- For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: AUDIO CODING



(57) Abstract: An audio encoding scheme or a stream that encodes audio and video data is disclosed. The scheme has particular application in mezzanine-level coding in digital television broadcasting. The scheme has a mean effective audio frame length F that equals the video frame length $1/f_v$ over an integral number M video frames, by provision of audio frames variable in length F in a defined sequence where length = $F(j)$ at encoding. The length of the audio frames may be varied by altering the length of overlap between adjacent frames in accordance with an algorithm that repeats after a sequence of M frames. An encoder and a decoder for such a scheme are also disclosed.